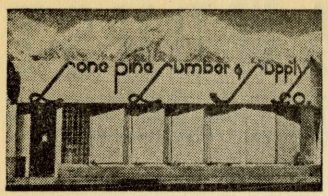
SAWDUST

Vol. II Feb. 1942 No. 2

A Monthly Publication Of General Interest Issued By The Lone Pine Lumber & Supply Co. For Complimentary Circulation Among Its Friends, Customers and Customers-To-Be.



THE LUMBER YARD GANG

Rudie Henderson	Tom Henderson	Ernest Lasky
J. W. McKinney	Clark O'Connell	Chuck Harned
Ernest Hagen	Jesse Brown	John Hale
S. J. "Pop" Raper	Bob Henderson	Christine Erwin
Edward Hjeltness	Guy Martin	Bennie Archuleta
Jack Barnes	-o-	Victor Musick

VOL. II FEBRUARY 1942 NO. 2

Last month we devoted this page to excerpts of a letter to the then Capt. Lee Louderback, last known address Manila.

General Douglas MacArthur subsequently promoted him to the rank of Major. George Washington became a major at the age of 19. Lee Louderback at the age of 29.

The dispatch to his family from the War Department, read:

"Major Lee Antone Louderback was killed in defense of his country in the Philippine Islands Feb. 1st.

"ADAMS, Adj. Gen.,
"Washington, D. C."

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And, when the stream
Which overflowed the soul was passed away,
A consciousness remained that it had left,
Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory, images and precious thoughts,
That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.

--- Wordsworth.

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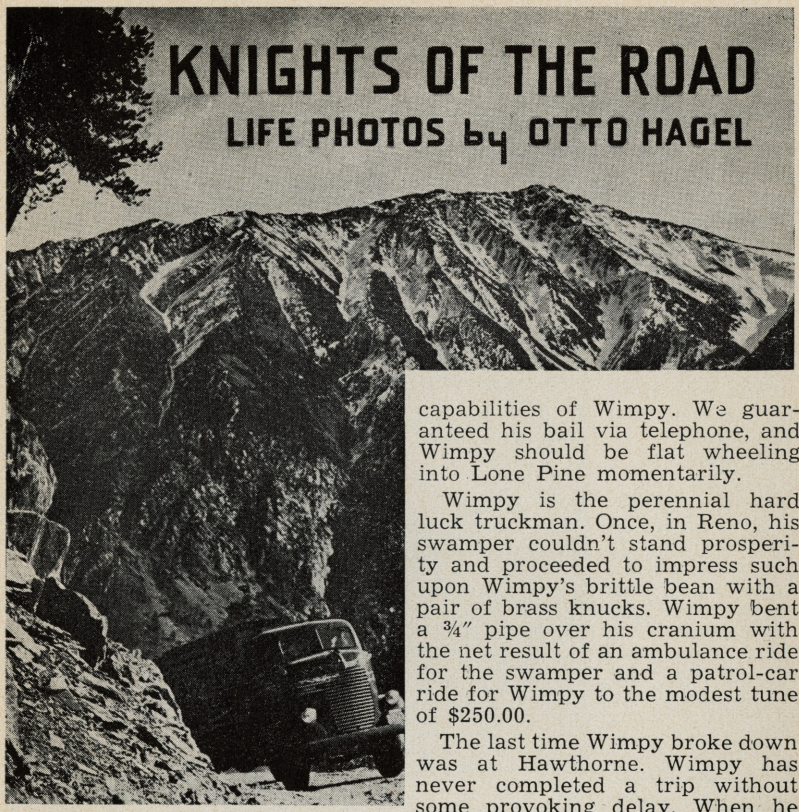
MAJOR LEE ANTONE LOUDERBACK
1912 - 1942

KNIGHTS OF THE ROAD

LIFE PHOTOS by OTTO HAGEL



The time is midnight. This has indeed been a large day. Wimpy Faulkner got us out of bed at 5 a.m. with a long distance call from Carson City. Wimpy, it seems, was rolling down from Westwood with 20,000 feet of Ponderosa, and in slinking through Nevada while the cops were presumably immersed in sweet dreams, he ran smack into Old Man Bad Luck. He was nabbed for not having Nevada plates.

How he expected to soothe the justified ill-humor of a judge rousted out of bed before 5 a.m. is characteristic and not beyond the capabilities of Wimpy. We guaranteed his bail via telephone, and Wimpy should be flat wheeling into Lone Pine momentarily.

Wimpy is the perennial hard luck truckman. Once, in Reno, his swamper couldn't stand prosperity and proceeded to impress such upon Wimpy's brittle bean with a pair of brass knucks. Wimpy bent a ¾" pipe over his cranium with the net result of an ambulance ride for the swamper and a patrol-car ride for Wimpy to the modest tune of $250.00.

The last time Wimpy broke down was at Hawthorne. Wimpy has never completed a trip without some provoking delay. When he telegraphed for relief while we were in a grumpy mood, we wired back with the enlightening suggestion that he borrow a wheelbarrow.

We mentioned the time was now midnight.

If Joe Baker, piloting for Lamb Transportation Company, is on schedule, and he invariably is, he should now be threading the ram's horn curves of Mint Canyon with 20 tons of sheathing paper for the West End Chemical Company. At this moment his International is probably drumming in double compound low at Boiling Point,

easing her just a bit at the heaviest curves, ready to craftily shift gears at the summit for the booming purr of the downhill stretch in compression. The art in mountain driving is not alone or so much in getting up hill; it is in getting down hill.

At dawn, Joe should be slithering through the pink crested buttes of Poison Canyon with his International sprinting like a Texas steer, and his Utility trailer leaping like a yearling at the points, for half of his run will then be done.

There IS a driver for you!

Picture yourself starting at the North Pole and driving down the North and South American continents to the South Pole, continuing on out across the other side of the world via Singapore and back up to the North Pole. After completing that round trip, you then set out and did it seven more times. After eight such trips you should justifiably feel entitled to a bent fender or two. But not Joe. In the past 4½ years, Joe Baker has piloted his truck and trailer more than 200,000 miles, all accident free.

LEE MEYERS ROLLING OFF LOAD OF TIMBERS AT U. S. VANADIUM MINE.

Lone Pine's own Ralph Smith should at this hour be at Monolith, patiently awaiting his turn for 450 sacks of cement while government truck after government truck is rolled in line ahead of him. But Ralph is patient. Truck drivers have to be to wait in line as long as 28½ hours for a load of cement.

The dean of long haul drivers is our own V. M. Rhyan. Rhyan has rolled between Los Angeles harbor and Lone Pine three times weekly for more than seven years. Tritely speaking he is "Old Reliable." He fights the crane men at the docks to get our stocks, even though it means a day or two lay-over.

In rush periods, a word to Rhyan is all that is necessary for more equipment. There was that epic occasion on July 2, 1938, when RKO's "Gunga Din" movie set burned to the ground. We passed the word along to Rhyan that 4th of July or no holiday, we must have 13 truck and trailer loads in Lone Pine.

The firecrackers were exploding in Lone Pine early on the morning of that July 4th. And on that morning the 13 truck and trailers were in a symmetrical parade from the Dow Hotel to the High School. But one of them wasn't Rhyan. He didn't bring out a load of the "cream" for himself as he was rightly entitled. He and his wife, bless them, got into their passenger car for the all night drive to Lone Pine to prod along the loads and kick the stragglers in the differentials.

The dean of short-haulers is E. P. Fitzgerald and his crew.

Old Fitz, in person, should at this hour be hitting the flinty cor-

duroy between the Devil's Golf Course and Badwater in the depths of Death Valley enroute to Warm Springs. That is no mid-day drive.

Fitz rolled out about 8 o'clock this evening, skirting the southern fringe of the Inyos, taking the shock of the curves on the north rim of the Argus mountains while slewing down into Panamint Valley. If as it usually does, his engine sizzled as he bottom-holed it up the stretch of 17% grade to the summit of the Panamints before the long down-hill grind to Stovepipe. Skirting the Death Valley dunes, traversing the Devil's Cornfield and clattering across the salt flats north of Furnace Creek, and then an anxious touch of the tires at the end of the pavement before hitting the 40 miles of corduroy for the balance of the journey to Warm Springs.

Another of Fitz's trucks was loaded this afternoon. At 4 a.m. Charlie Meysan's alarm will jolt him out of a cozy bed for the so-called drop-shipment run to Mono Lake. Charlie's first delivery after stopping for an eye-opening cup of steaming coffee at Bishop will be over the summit of Sherwin to Hot Creek. Other drop-offs will include Mammoth, Twin Lakes and Crystal Crag. Thence back to the main highway for the grind over Deadman into June Lake and Leevining.

Fitz's other driver, Lee Meyers,

FITZGERALD'S TRUCK (INSET) CRAWLING UP MORGAN CREEK CANYON GRADE. NOTE ROAD UPPER RIGHT, AND SWITCH-BACKS IN FAR DISTANCE.

will also roll out at 4 a.m. for the daily jaunt over America's Burma Road to the U. S. Vanadium mine. This morning's load goes to "C" level, some 11,400 feet above sea level. However, most loads go to only 10,800 feet. At that altitude a few hundred feet makes a pile of difference to carburetors.

Formerly, most of the U. S. Vanadium deliveries went to Laws in the floor of Owens Valley. But a couple of years ago, the New York officials put in a purchasing agent, by a mistake, that wouldn't take the old song. When we in the lumber business, that put our brains up in curl papers, told him we couldn't haul through and over snow that ranged as much as 75 feet in depth, he smiled softly.

In short, deliveries to the mine have since been made virtually every day.

Fitzgerald has two trucks geared like mountain goats for that run. One of them has a selection of only 20 gear shifts, but the other has a full 30. You boulevard drivers fussing about 3 shifts at a stop sign should try untangling 20, let alone 30.

The last six miles of the Vanadium haul is over dirt road with curves so sharp that it is necessary to ease into reverse gear to turn the sharp radii, and where the grades are so steep that they all but pull the splinters clean out of the lumber. Bottom-holing up hill at a speed of two miles per hour, allows ample time for Lee to hum a dirge or two.

To the Knights of the Road, who can give the average motorist a lesson or two in driving courtesy, we offer this toast:

"To you who take the sickening slew, the lurch on lurch, the shortened exhaust along the tangent, the giddy roll to the elevation and the sudden shock of the curve, the roar of the motor on the ear, and above it all, the booming purr of rubber on asphalt. Ah, the canoe in the heart of the rapids, the bridge of a liner at sea, the gun in the heat of the fight, take something of this—the cab of the truck takes it all. When you get to the right side of the Jordan may there still be something like an eternity of fast runs between you and a busted axle."

—SD—

Behind the Bandsaw—

"Well, I certainly made a good impression on her," said the cane bottom chair as the artist's model stood up.

—SD—

They put the new recruit in a private room at the hospital because the nurses thought he was just too cute for wards.

—SD—

Once there was a Scotchman that was so close—that he got his face slapped.

—SD—

"Hello, Sam . . . rowing?"

"Nope . . . just digging a hole in the lake."

—SD—

"What makes people walk in their sleep?"

"Twin beds."

—SD—

The woman autoist posed for a snapshot in front of the fallen pillars of an ancient temple in Greece.

"Don't get the car in the picture," she said, "or my husband will think I ran into the place."

—SD—

Two small British boys were gazing at a butcher shop window decorated for Christmas. One of them pointed to a number of hams hanging from a large holly branch. "Look, Tom," he said. "Look at them 'ams agrowing up there."

"Get away," said the other. " 'Ams don't grow."

"Well, that's all you know about it," said the first scornfully. "Ain't you ever 'eard of an 'ambush?"

An Open Letter to the Trustees of the Lone Pine Union High School District

Dr. Fred G. Smith, Pres.,
Mr. E. D. Hoag, Clerk,
Mr. R. S. Hiter,
Dr. Geo. D. Shultz,
Mrs. Roy Willis,

Dear Sirs & Madam:

Although the minutes of your February 10th meeting state only, as a result of increased costs of living, discussion was had relative to increasing teachers' salaries, it is admitted that the purpose was towards a proposed 20% raise to become effective immediately on prevailing contracts if it could be found legally possible to do so.

Since that meeting you have received a ruling that no increase in teachers' salaries is legal for the balance of this school term.

It is therefore logical to assume that increases proposed now would carry over into the next school year. As a result thereof, increases not legal now will probably be granted on new contracts for next term.

One of your members stated to the writer that there were two reasons for the proposed 20% increase. Namely: the aforementioned increased cost of living and the lure of better paying jobs elsewhere.

The increased cost of living effects all of us. For the greater part there is nothing we can do about it.

As an employer of some 18 persons, our salaries exclusive of stenographic and custodian services for the year ending Dec. 31, 1941, ranged, with one solitary exception, from $1,320.00 to a maximum of $1,800.00 per year. That was their over-all pay—no overtime—no extras other than a modest Christmas bonus.

Our maximum salaries of $1,800.00 are the minimum for your teachers and continue to a maximum of $2,950.00. You also allow extra pay for those teaching night classes.

Our men work 310 days per year. Your teachers with the exception of one or two, work about 180 days per year.

In my own case, being a stupid sort of person, it is necessary that I devote some 12 to 16 hours a day toward making a living. An evening at home with my family, not excluding Sunday, is indeed a rarity. For the year 1941, more than one-half of what I made went out for direct taxation.

Exclusive of extra pay for night classes, your certified employees will draw for this school term a total of $18,750.00 in salaries. Suppose some $10,000.00 of this was paid out by them in direct taxes. There would probably be a hue and cry of excessive taxation. Yet that is the exact parallel of myself. But I realize that we have a war. I do not expect to do as well while this war is in progress.

I cite to you numerous instances of other business men. We have our automobile and tire dealers who emphatically are not doing as well, high cost of living regardless. Mr. Howard R. Ellis informs me that for the month of January his Bishop branch sustained a loss of $1,161.62 and his Lone Pine institution $230.01.

Can you by the wildest stretch of imagination assume that our service stations, wholesale gasoline vendors, restaurants, motor courts, and those depending upon more or less income from an average of

20 motion picture locations per year are going to do as well as in the past? Who do they have to restore their income to normal, let alone an additional 20% to offset increased living costs?

Therefore, why should school teachers expect to be kept at parity? Particularly when such parity must further add to the burdens of my business, my employees, and that of every other taxpayer in the community?

Insofar as our school teachers being lured to higher paid jobs, what of it? Trying to keep up with the Joneses has busted many a man.

Basically, the great majority of us are going to have less butter as this war progresses. As long as it means more guns, most of us are tightening our belts without grumbling. It is without common sense, it is unpatriotic, and it is not to the public weal, if you as a Board, feel that school teachers should not likewise be expected to do the same.

Respectfully yours,
Rudie Henderson.

—SD—

Wallpaper

Our thanks to Mr. Roger Butterfield, National Affairs Editor of LIFE for the pictures in this issue and others yet to come . . . Although it appears at this writing that Congress is about to repeal their self-pensions it is interesting to note that in an extreme case a defeated Congressman who had served five years could buy himself a life pension with one payment of $1.39 . . . Illinois' Congresswoman Jessie Sumner asserts she voted for the bill without knowing that it provided pensions for Congressmen. Representatives voting for something they haven't read should take heed, lest they unintentionally vote us out of this war with a Fifth Column amendment . . . In one single week last month total Government buying of lumber was more than 900,000,000 feet. This is probably the largest amount of lumber ever bought inside a single week in the world's history . . . Recent distinguished guests included Mr. and Mrs. E. S. McKittrick of Huntington Park; Mr. and Mrs. John Dorwood and daughters of Westend with their guests Mr. Ed Tennant of Seattle and two RAF Cadets fresh from England and Scotland; William Reid and Reginald Bower . . . Wonder whatever became of that old ditty of "Save up your money, and save up your rocks, and you'll always have tobacco in your old tobacco box"? . . . Remember when an ammonia gun was a necessary item to squirt recalcitrant canines in the eyes when out cycling? . . . A prerequisite of the next peace treaty should be the universal showing throughout Germany and Italy of Charlie Chaplin's "The Great Dictator" . . . Maybe the war isn't going just right YET, but bear in mind that on the ground, mass production is our greatest aptitude; we invented it. The air is our street; we found it first and opened it to traffic. Air war is our war.

—SD—

Bouquets—

"If you leave me off the list—Michael will be mad as hell—he loves the pictures of the monkeys." Irving G. Bishop.

—SD—

"It's O. K."—Barney Johnson, Crystal Crag Lodge.

—SD—

"Think it simply grand and newsy."—Rudie Kraut, Westend, Cal.

—SD—

"It's a dinger. Keep it up."—Jim Rogers, Lone Pine, Cal.